

Workgroup on Trash Burning

October 26, 2006

DNR Air Quality Bureau offices – Urbandale, Iowa

Meeting Minutes

Welcome/Introductions – Jim McGraw

Overview of last meeting: Last meeting we started with a general background on trash burning and general solid waste issues. There were several presentations on these topics by the DNR. In the afternoon we narrowed down the top 10 priorities (listed below) identified as a result of our discussions. Each person had five votes to identify their top priorities based on the strand of topics that were originally put together. Today we will break into subgroups to break these topics down further. Small groups will bring their expertise/strategies to deal with the issues. Secondly, every small group has a DNR person involved to help serve as a reference.

Facilitator - Any Questions/Comments?

Comments from participants

Political will is obviously missing from this list. This applies to each one of these topics. This is probably a strategy that needs to be considered in each of the small group topics.

It seems that there are some strategies that can be combined. As groups split up, it appears that we may end up combining the topics anyway.

Facilitator - It's good to narrow topics down as far as we can so each strategy is very specific.

Discussion of lunch and the process for the day.

Top 10 priorities from last meeting

1. Health Issues
2. Environmental Issues
3. Consequences/enforcement (+/-)
4. Incorporated (towns/cities)
5. Education/Behavior
6. Cost/convenience of options
7. Unincorporated
8. If people burn leaves, they'll burn everything
9. Options available
10. Resistance to change

Facilitator - Are there any interest groups that aren't represented at this meeting that should be?

Comments from participants

-Farm Bureau was here last time, but there was no response for this meeting.
-The president of the farmer's union is attending later this morning.
-Materials are sent to people on the invite list whether they're here or not.
-Caucus staff and general assembly staff has been invited to attend as well.
-League of Cities & ISAC – both have been invited. Don Reasoner is representing ISAC. Jon Easter plans to attend the third meeting. No response has been received from League of Cities.

We're all aware there's going to be opposition. We'll want to keep that in mind as we move forward and maybe pick our battles if necessary.

Invitee list is kept in the loop about all our discussions and receives copies of the material that's sent out.

- Iowa Environmental Health Association and Public health departments (nurses)
- Association of sheriff and deputies? (Boone Sheriff was invited) Contacts will be provided for these associations.
- U of I Environmental Health/Leopold Center.
- Clinton County Solid Waste person is on the list and will attend the next meeting.
- Another group would be the county engineers if there's an association.
- Extension services

Group Work: break into sub-groups for discussion.

Groups were combined into the following:

- 1. Health Issues**
- 2. Environmental Issues**
- 3. Education/Behavior and Resistance to change**
- 4. Incorporated (towns/cities) and Unincorporated**
- 5. Consequences/enforcement (+/-) and if people burn leaves, they'll burn everything**
- 6. Cost/convenience of options with options available**

Morning Groups/Members:

Health Issues: Susan Salterberg, Stu Schmitz, Carole Lamphier, Jim McGraw, Beth Hicks, Leslie Goldsmith, Becky Jolly, Chris Petersen, Jane Miller

Consequences/enforcement (+/-) and if people burn leaves, they'll burn everything: Joe Sanfilippo, Nicki Stajcar, Tom Newbanks, Gary Young, Joseph Karge, Jill Cornell, Neila Seaman

Incorporated (towns/cities) and Unincorporated: Mark Warren, Don Reasoner, Rodger Kaster, Cindy Turkle, Tom Hadden, Jennifer Ryan

Report-outs from morning subgroups

Incorporated (towns/cities) and Unincorporated

- There are health/environmental issues regarding burning waste. However it's unlikely we can get everything we want. So we narrowed it down.
- Need a state law so that the DNR can be blamed (cities won't do it if it's not mandated by someone). State law to burn trash burning (not yard waste). Need to start somewhere.

3 year implementation plan:

- All trash burning in incorporated areas is banned. Do we require the cities to develop ordinances? May not be necessary if it's state law.
- Target education to cities: sample ordinances, collection contract samples, yard waste options, disposal options (such as citizen convenience centers), and enforcement options.
- Clarify "trash" definition.
- Proof of ordinance/enforcement.

State law 5 years out:

- Look at statewide trash burn ban.
- Include a county opt-out exception: Develop criteria to allow county supervisors to provide documentation that there are not adequate collection options available for residential waste collection.
- Phase-in to total ban (yard waste and garbage)???

Comments from full group:

- The 3 and 5 year numbers will help allow time for implementation and education.
- The work group as a whole can work to draft the actual legislation. A lot of the other subgroups have input that is valuable and impacts the way that the legislation may be drafted.
- Instead of opt out, we should allow for an extension of time to come into compliance. - The criteria to opt out still needs developed. Ideally there should be an entire ban and no burning is allowed, however the phase in and opt out options are there to help at least get something in place. (An entire ban won't get passed)
- Legislation now affects all incorporated communities (UBP regulations) it's working relatively well with UBP so it makes sense to do it with trash burning, too.
- The phase-in will also allow for time to plan and implement.
- In time we need to go towards a total ban. We need to lobby legislators to help encourage/enforce people to do the right things towards a cleaner environment. (Long term strategy to renewable fuel use, etc.) Legislators are educated.
- Solid waste hierarchy should be considered. Maybe a tie to burning with energy production.

Consequences/enforcement (+/-) and if people burn leaves, they'll burn everything

- Phase in ban of trash only (there no political will to ban burning everything).
- Population based:
- 2500+ ban by July 2008
- 500-2500 ban by July 2010
- Statewide ban by 2020 (tied to the healthy Iowans goal).
- Graduated fine structure (fines go back to that jurisdiction, not general fund) with consequences high enough to discourage burning and for better use of enforcement resources.
- Permitting - needs discussion. Helps to be more acceptable. However, on the legislative level this may be risky, maybe they won't ever ban if we allow permits?? (only for cities not already banned)
- Model ordinances need to be developed by DNR (Polk/Linn County have examples).
- Increased resources need to be provided...cost of infrastructure, enforcement, illegal dumping, buy-in by cities, education.
- Tax incentives to ban burning?
- Short term discounted trash pick up.

Comments from the full group:

- In small towns, it can be hard to get a hold of people. Consequences may be whether these cities can stay incorporated or not.
- There's a lot of overlap between these groups. If you go to 2020 that's too far out.
- Baby boomers will have more asthma and health issues sooner than this.
- Everything ties into education on this whole thing. It takes time to implement.
- What about tax incentives to ban burning – is this being done anywhere else?
- Minnesota used a discounted garbage service for a few months as an incentive along with an educational strategy.
- Permitting (why do we allow it?) – to at least get some control over it, have requirements to meet, and economic incentives to use haulers. Currently we're not making a recommendation one way or another. (It could be a good thing or bad thing). But possible it's politically easier to swallow. It'd be another phase-in step. If they're paying a fee to burn now...eventually when it's banned, they'll have to pay, but they're used to paying already.

Health Issues

Brainstorm of issues:

- PM 2.5 particulate matter concerns.

Exposure routes:

- ID primary pollutants of concern – dioxins.
- Exposure Routes: inhalation, food consumption, water quality.
- Safety, property damage.
- Who's affected (at most risk)?
- Health care costs.
- Exacerbation of existing health conditions.
- Quality of air equals quality of air.

Strategies: (Audience dependent)

- Education committee: identify target audiences, health issues and messages, ways to create awareness.
- IDNR and IDPH develop fact sheets of health issues associated with open burning: pollutants of concern, exposure routes, health impacts, health care costs, at risk populations, quality of life.
- Identify gaps in existing information and how they should be filled.
- Health is part of the education process for law makers and anyone involved in this issue.

Comments from the full group:

- May not necessarily need to do more research, but to gather and develop references for the information we have in the fact sheet. Need a database of good resources for people to reference. We could include this in the fact sheet.
- Government agency research is generally non-biased (some private firms hire out for studies that may not be good to reference).
- There's a lot of data on the PM 2.5, however some of the other data may be more difficult to gather.
- Different information has higher importance to different people.
- Some health issues overlap with environmental issues.
- Wellmark Blue Cross may be a resource of funding for a study on city comparisons.

Afternoon Groups/Members

Environmental Issues: Mark Warren, Joe Sanfilippo, Chris Petersen, Rodger Kaster, Mike Boesen, Don Reasoner, Gary Young, Neila Seaman

Cost/convenience of options with options available: Jim McGraw, Cindy Turkle, Tom Hadden, Jane Miller, Stu Schmitz, Beth Hicks, Tom Newbanks

Education/Behavior and Resistance to change: Jen Ryan, Jill Cornell, Carole Lamphier, Leslie Goldsmith, Susan Salterberg, Nicki Stajcar

Environmental Issues

These are all based on the assumption that we have a trash-burning ban.

- Education to get the word out (political).
- Waste alternative: available/affordable (mandated).
- Alternate disposal must be in place (not just a landfill), including markets for recycling, etc.
- Illegal dumping/burning may result in burning decreased dumping increased
- Increase recycle capacity.
- Community partnering – recyclable issues, shredders shared. (Resource Inventory to drive partnerships) i.e. cardboard.
- Equipment Sharing.
- Partnership opportunities (public-private/ public-public).
- Smoke/Nuisance is what's driving everything we're doing. (If burning isn't banned, this is the environmental impact.)
- Grant Availability, some areas may need at least start up funding.

Comments from full group:

- Is there an increase in illegal dumping if burning is banned?
- There was an example of a neighbor that set out recycling once it was mandated, but not before that.
- Some people will be resistant, but others will comply. DNR spends 90% of time on 10% of the people, so maybe the resistance won't be as big as we think.

Facilitator – Is this the worst case or best case scenario? The ones against it will also be the ones who are the most vocal that have the ability to drive the political process. In education, we have to deal with the 10%.

Cost/convenience of options with options available

- We talked about available options before we looked at costs.
- Available options as opposed to burning: Waste collection, recycling, illegal dumping, self-hauling, composting, backyard composting, burial onsite, and accumulation onsite.
- We looked at it in an approach of incorporated/unincorporated.

Incorporated: applies to all sizes of cities:

- City wide pickup (do it themselves, licenses, outside haulers, etc.).
- Permitted citizen convenience center in the incorporated area (so it's convenient).
- Provide sample contracts, bidding document examples, billing approaches examples, special needs programs.
- Financing options – SWAP grant money, utility fees.

Unincorporated:

- Legislature mandate for counties to have a strategy (working with solid waste management commission) and timeline for rural collection.
- Examples: cooperative groups (28E), zoning, contracting, county-operated.
- Billing: property tax or special assessment so each household is assessed the cost.
- Counties won't discuss this unless we require the strategy and time-line to do it. Have to have an approach to get them moving forward.

Comments from the full group:

- Would the Citizens Convenience Center be staffed? If someone goes to a school in a different town, then it doesn't matter if they have to drive to another town. We have to determine what is considered convenient.

Education/Behavior and Resistance to change

Education in conjunction with the phase in approved legislative law. Tailor made to accommodate 500-2500 population based.

- Audiences (priorities), public officials, decision-makers (enforcement), public (children-elderly), urban, rural, those who burn/those who don't burn.

We identify the problems as they relate to the health/environment. We also identify resources available to how/what to do about the problem to solve the problem.

Potential messages:

1. Stories of real people (crying kid with asthma) compelling stories, local consideration (burn barrel scenario)
2. Education in schools – kids go home to parents
3. What's in it for me?
4. Asthma walk
5. Research (well-documented)
6. Dioxin – eat, drink, bio-accumulation, rural
7. Stewards of environment
8. Health – asthma and others, values, well being
9. Health care costs/financial
10. Environment (air-shed compared to watershed)
11. Compare burn barrel to incinerator
12. Air quality index, travel, Iowa media, does Iowa have air issues?
13. Enforced/told what to do, results in changed behavior
14. Education gives perspective.
15. Alternatives/options for waste management
16. Face to face – ammunition to be the sales people
17. Individuals vs. groups – legislators, public advocates for change
18. Economics, savings – state supported healthcare, numbers from local hospitals
19. Give solutions

Approaches

1. Face to face with public officials
2. Curriculum – environment integrated, into math, reading, etc.
3. Family life issues – extension, libraries, church and civic groups
4. Word of mouth
5. Mass media public awareness campaign – sponsored by insurance company
6. Grassroots
7. Equip public officials with communication materials, press packet, presentations – tailored to fit their community
8. Unincorporated as part of the package
9. Network the networks – identification of resource people
10. Focus group testing
11. Minimize waste – printed materials, CD s, mass production
12. Resource people - \$ toward them

Comments from the full group

-We didn't talk about education by the police force as part of their presentation (could use them as a resource person when they present to schools).
-This is assuming a ban gets implemented. We need education prior to it being implemented (cover health, and environment).

- Have real stories to tell because there'll be opposition, but we need that ammunition to justify why the ban is necessary.
- In order for this campaign to be successful it has to be a grassroots effort. We can say the DNR is mandating, but local officials have to be the ones to say this is why it's a good idea to comply.
- Rural outreach workshop is going to give info on farm disposal of hazardous materials.
- Farmers are talking about their habits and preferences so this might be a good resource to get more outreach.
- When unincorporated is targeted, include the wives/women, too, not just the men.
- Education alone won't do it, but coupled with the mandate it's necessary.

Facilitator – What's our fall back if we don't get a mandate? What are our other options? We need to lobby the larger communities, and local agencies/entities. This should be part of our agenda for the next meeting.

- Trying to implement more available cost effective options.
- The law would make this all ideal, but that doesn't mean the education can't start now.
- What happened last time? A rulemaking was tried but it was trying to ban all open burning statewide (leaf and trash). We didn't have any workgroup/consensus building. We ended up terminating the rulemaking.
- Comp plans are responsible to provide the options for disposal, but solid waste isn't their responsibility. They can't require farmers to take waste to the landfill. They'd prefer to get the waste at the landfill rather than burning.

Facilitator - We have to address economic issues, where can we go if this doesn't happen, how can we pull off legislation. There are a lot of planning issues to deal with at the next meeting. There are also a lot of common positives across the groups. What is acceptable for those things that not everyone agrees on?

Code words...rural/unincorporated, decentralized group, reward/punishment argument, costs, etc. We need to address these things to come up with where to go with this plan. Also, how do we deal with the vocal anti-group? How do we approach them and counter balance them?

Is it ok to do legislation before education?

What are the core issues you want us to make sure we address? (email your core issues to Christine)

Next meeting is November 8th. DNR staff and Mike Thompson will meet to prepare on agenda for the November 8th meeting.